Prescott National Forest Plan

Amendment 14

To the 2004 republished version (V1.1) of the 1986 Forest Plan, as amended

Integrated Treatment of Noxious or Invasive Weeds

November 8, 2004

(New text is in **boldface.** Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~.)

Human Resources

Manage human resource programs to provide employment and economic development opportunities while meeting natural resource goals.

Vegetation Management

Utilize NEPA procedures to establish project objectives, locations and methods. Documentation of decisions will include the rationale for these items.

Vegetation management projects are subjected to environmental analysis according to NEPA regulations. This is analysis specific and contains documentation for the: (1) project objectives; (2) site selection process; and (3) treatment method selection rationale.

Examine the feasibility of prescribing fire under naturally occurring conditions.

Prevent any new noxious or invasive weed species from becoming established, contain or control the spread of known weed species, and eradicate species that are the most invasive and pose the greatest threat to biological diversity and watershed condition.

Objectives

An objective is defined as “a concise, time specific statement of measurable planned results that respond to pre-established goals. An objective forms the basis for further planning to define the precise steps to be taken and the resources to be used in achieving identified goals” (36 CFR 219.3). Forest objectives are quantitative. They are time-oriented outputs that are associated with a given budget level. The objectives need to be achieved to accomplish goals.

Standards and guidelines to achieve the objectives are found in the management prescriptions section in Chapter 4. Objectives by resource program area are expressed as annual outputs in a table located in Appendix D of this document. These output levels assume full funding is received in all resource program areas. Individual project schedules are maintained separately from the Forest Plan as supporting documentation for current and future programs and budgets. Annual estimates of individual program output and costs for each year covered by the Forest Plan are summarized in the “Prescott National Forest Plan Implementation Spreadsheets.” These documents are updated at least once every year, and are available for review at the forest supervisor’s office in Prescott, AZ.

Management Prescriptions

The mission, goals and objectives for the Prescott National Forest are attained through applying groups of management activities to specific units of land. Groups of management activities are called “prescriptions” and the land units are called “management areas.” This portion of the Forest Plan describes the linkage between prescriptions and management areas.

Management prescriptions are combinations of management practices, activities and standards, and guidelines designed to achieve specific multiple-use goals and objectives. Management prescriptions include all the necessary mitigation and resource coordination measures required by law, regulations and policies. Different management prescriptions were developed to emphasize individual resource potentials, continue current management, manage at a reduced intensity, and address public issues and management concerns. The FORPLAN model assigned the prescriptions to specific analysis areas

while maximizing present net value within the limits of the constraints used to meet the goals and objectives of the alternatives considered. Thus, the most cost-efficient prescriptions that meet the objectives were chosen for each alternative.

All prescriptions developed for the Forest Plan integrate a number of resource and support activities and produce a variety of outputs when applied to a management area. Each prescription is broken into the categories listed below.

Management Area Description

This is a brief description of the physical, biological and administrative characteristics of the management area to which the prescription applies.

Analysis Area

Analysis areas are used to predict the response of identified land areas to various management activities. Analysis areas on the Prescott National Forest are noncontiguous groupings of capability areas. The capability areas can be defined and delineated on maps and can be identified on the ground. Data was generated for each analysis area for the purpose of estimating the capacity to provide goods, services and or resource uses for each prescription. See Appendix A for a listing and brief description of analysis areas.

Management Emphasis

This is a statement regarding the resource management emphasis for the prescription.

Program Element

This is an individual resource program area of responsibility which, in combination with other elements, comprises the directed mission of the Forest Service to fulfill statutory or executive requirements.

Management Information Handbook (MIH) Activity Code

This is a list of resource management activities applicable to management practices. These activities are grouped into resource or support elements and are identified by an alpha/numeric code, such as A01 or D03. Each activity has a unique code, title and unit of measure for the work performed. An index of codes is provided in the Management Information Handbook FSH 1309.11a.

Applicable Analysis Areas

This is a list of areas where each activity is applicable within the management area.

Standards and Guidelines

A description of standards and guidelines sets forth:

1. Specific policies that apply to activities in each prescription;
2. Timing and intensity of planned activities; and
3. Mitigation measures and coordination requirements needed to protect resources and the environment.

Control insect or disease outbreaks when they become epidemic by mechanical, biological or chemical methods. Method utilized will be determined through the NEPA process and cost analysis.

Range Riparian Protection

Eliminate yearlong grazing in riparian areas.

Implement grazing systems and/or methods that will advance the ecological objectives for riparian dependent resources, and require sufficient recovery rest to meet the physiological needs of the plants and plant associations.

Riparian areas within a watershed will be managed at an intensity commensurate with that typical of the rest of the watershed.

Complete an inventory and survey of riparian areas within the first 2 years.

Proper allowable use within riparian areas will not exceed 20 percent on woody species.

Salting within a quarter mile of riparian areas for the purpose of management of livestock is prohibited. This includes the use of salt to gather livestock.

Resource Protection and Mitigation

Meet threatened and endangered species requirements in all range or grazing activities.

Livestock will be excluded from Granite Basin Lake, Lynx Lake and Horsethief Lake.

Encourage nonuse for resource protection purposes when adverse range conditions are prevalent.

Unauthorized livestock on National Forest System lands may be impounded and disposed of by forest officers. Enforce grazing regulations found in 36 CFR and Title 18 USC dealing with livestock management.

~~Control noxious weeds on rangelands to prevent significant population buildups.~~

~~Pesticides will be applied in accordance with their respective labels, State and Federal laws, and the requirements developed in project environmental documentation.~~

Allow appropriate predator control measures where livestock losses are documented and exceed the cost of control.

Range Forage Improvement

Permittee investment will be encouraged by giving priority to projects that contain at least equal value contributions by the grazing permittee.

~~When using pesticides, avoid direct application to water. Do not mix or load chemicals near streams or wet areas.~~

Implement water yield improvement plans by treating 13,255 acres of chaparral per decade between 1986 and 2035. Treat chaparral in accordance with the following guidelines:

- No more than 70 percent of any contiguous stand will be treated at one time.
- Cleared spaces between untreated blocks will not exceed a quarter mile across.
- ~~Application of herbicides will be in accordance with EPA registered labels.~~
- ~~Risk analyses will be completed for substances used where scientific certainty is inadequate or where inadequate data is available on human health or environmental consequences.~~
- Treatments will be less than 20 percent of a fifth-code watershed within a decade.

Implement watershed condition improvement plans to stabilize soils and improve streamflow characteristics. Conform treatments to the following guidelines:

- Measures will be implemented on portions of the watersheds that are in unsatisfactory condition.
- Causes of unsatisfactory conditions will be corrected.
- Grazing use will be balanced with respect to range capacity prior to and after the implementation of watershed improvements.
- Firewood harvest from areas requiring structural measures to control erosion will focus upon long-term stability of the soil and not the production of wood fiber or range forage.

Administer all prepared watershed plans in coordination with Federal, State and local governments.

Obtain water rights for developments that provide water for forest uses.

Prepare resource inventory reports to summarize inventories and facilitate preparation of watershed management plans.

Maintain forest water rights by: (1) updating inventories of water use rights and requirements; (2) participating in adjudications; and (3) managing acquired rights for protection of the beneficial uses that are stated in the right.

Minimize impacts to soil and water resources in all ground-disturbing activities. Where disturbance cannot be avoided, provide stabilization and revegetation as part of the project.

Documentation of environmental analyses for ground-disturbing activities will include discussion of expected effects on water quality, describe specific mitigation measures that will be taken, and describe water quality monitoring that will be conducted as part of the projects.

Select treatment methods for plant control or revegetation projects according to the following criteria:

1. Mechanical methods may be used:
    - On slopes less than 40 percent;
    - On soils with moderate or high revegetation potential; and
    - When they will not adversely affect stream channels.

permanent and temporary field-going field employees and other public contact employees get an annual review of law enforcement regulations and responsibilities.

Give high priority to public education programs and actions to prevent resource damage and intense user conflicts. Law enforcement actions (patrols, violation issuance, etc.) will be given the highest priority where irreversible damage to resources or intense user conflicts may result.

Develop a systematic means of responding to public complaints dealing with law enforcement matters. Utilize the standard Forest Service "Incident Report" and/or other effective means to ensure accurate recording of complaints and an effective Forest Service response. All violations and incidents will be tracked using the existing Law Enforcement Management Reporting System (LEMARS). Annual reports will be developed and maintained for public information and for reprioritizing future law enforcement efforts (patrol times, places, days, etc.).

The forest supervisor's office will conduct a minimum of two law enforcement activity reviews per year. Adjustments to the law enforcement program will be determined as part of the review action plan developed from review findings.

Develop and distribute public education materials with emphasis on topics concerning off-highway vehicle use/regulations, law enforcement procedures/violation reporting, and firewood permits/regulations.

Prioritize law enforcement efforts with respect to times and places where violations are likely to occur, and focus efforts on priority situations.

Cooperate and coordinate with other law enforcement agencies to provide protection for forest resources and users. Increase interagency communication to enhance joint and individual law enforcement responsibilities.

Initiate search and rescue operations as a supportive service under the jurisdiction of the County Sheriff whenever the need arises.

Insect and Disease Management

Detect and monitor insect and disease activities. Control if necessary to protect resources or uses. The method of control to be utilized will be determined through the NEPA process and cost analysis.

Incorporate measures to control invasive species into project planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Use the Appendix B "Design Features, Best Management Practices, Required Protection Measures and Mitigation Measures" in the "Final Environmental Impact Statement for Integrated Treatment of Noxious or Invasive Weeds on the Coconino, Kaibab, and Prescott National Forests within Coconino, Gila, Mohave, and Yavapai Counties, Arizona" (2004) for specific mitigation measures. Deviance from Appendix B does not trigger the need for a forest plan amendment, however. Required Protection Measures from Section 7 consultation (Endangered Species Act) must be followed. If, as a result of environmental analysis, Best Management Practices or Mitigation Measures are modified, document the reason(s) in a NEPA decision.

Inholdings – Lands within the proclaimed boundaries of a national forest that are owned by some other agency, organization or individual.

Indicator Species – A wildlife species whose presence in a certain location or situation at a given population level indicates a particular environmental condition. Population changes are believed to indicate effects of management activities on a number of other wildlife species.

Indigenous Species – Species historically native to an area; not introduced by man.

Insecticide – An agent used to control insect populations.

Instream Flows – Those necessary to meet seasonal streamflow requirements for maintaining aquatic ecosystems, visual quality and recreational opportunities on national forest lands at acceptable levels.

Integrated Pest Management – A management strategy for suppression of forest pests that integrates silvicultural, mechanical, biological, and chemical suppression strategies that achieve greater efficiency and safety than the same strategies used alone.

Intensive Grazing – Grazing management that controls distribution of cattle and duration of use on the range, usually by fences, so parts of the range are rested during the growing season.

Interdisciplinary (ID) Team– A group of individuals with skills from different resources. An interdisciplinary team is assembled because no single scientific discipline is sufficient to adequately identify and resolve issues and problems. Team member interaction provides necessary insight to all stages of the process.

Intermediate Cutting – Any removal of trees from a stand between the time of its formation and the regeneration cut. The most commonly applied intermediate cuttings are release, thinning, improvement and salvage.

Intermittent Stream – A stream that does not flow throughout the year.

Interpretive Sites – A developed site at which a broad range of natural or cultural history is interpreted or described for the enjoyment of the public.

Intolerant Species – Those plant species that do not grow well in shade.

Invasive Species – Invasive species is defined as a species that is nonnative (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health (Executive Order 13112).

Inversion – A stable layer of air where the temperature of the air increases with height.

IRM – Integrated Resource Management.

Issue – A subject or question of widespread public discussion or interest regarding management of National Forest System lands.

K

K-V Funds – In 1930, Congress passed the Knutson-Vandenberg Act (K-V Act) to authorize collection of funds (K-V Funds) for reforestation and timber stand improvement work on areas cut over by a timber sale.

Nonmotorized – Any vehicle that is not activated by a nonliving power source, except small battery-powered, hand carried devices such as flashlights, shavers, Geiger counters and cameras.

Nonmarket Valued Outputs – Goods and services valued in terms of what reasonable people would be willing to pay.

Nonstructural Range Improvement – A modification of existing vegetation to improve the grazing resource.

Notice of Intent – A written notice to the affected district ranger by those who intend to engage in mining activity on the national forest.

Noxious Weed – ~~A noxious, destructive or troublesome plant when found to be in epidemic proportions and of economic importance to threaten the public welfare~~**. Noxious weed is a legal term applied to plants regulated by Federal and State laws, such as plants designated as noxious weeds by the Secretary of Agriculture or by the responsible State official. Noxious weeds generally possess one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage, poisonous, toxic, parasitic, a carrier or host of serious insect or disease, and being not native or new or not common to the United States or parts thereof. (Forest Service Manual 2080.5, Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, PL 93-629, as amended)**

O

O & M – Operation and Maintenance.

Objective – A clear and specific statement of planned results to be achieved within a stated time period. The results indicated in the statement of objectives are those that are designed to achieve the desired condition represented by the goal. An objective is measurable and implies precise, time-phased steps to be taken and resources to be used which, together, represent the basis for defining and controlling the work to be done.

Objective Function – A term in linear programming describing the criteria to be optimized. Examples of objective functions are to maximize timber, maximize livestock forage, or maximize present net value.

Obliteration – The returning of the land occupied by a road or trail to production.

Occupancy Trespass – The illegal occupation or possession of national forest land.

Off-Highway Vehicles – This includes all mechanical means of transportation (passenger cars, four-wheel-drive vehicles, trail bikes and snowmobiles) that are capable of traveling over land where no road exists.

OHV – See "Off-highway Vehicles."

Old Growth Habitat – A stand that is past full maturity and showing decadence; the last stage in forest succession. For characteristics, see Wildlife Technical Report 1983. Also see Appendix H.

Onsite Soil Loss – The movement of soil from the point at which it was formed to another location.

Operating Plan – A written plan of operation prepared by the proponent of a mining, milling, prospecting or exploration project to be conducted on the national forest when such use will cause significant surface disturbance. The plan includes provisions for the mitigation of the surface disturbing activities and is approved by the appropriate forest officer.